



March 26, 2010

Public Service Commission of South Carolina  
Clerk's Office  
P.O. Drawer 11649  
Columbia, SC 29211

**Re: South Carolina Electrical & Gas Company – Application for Increase in Rates & Charges**

Dear Public Service Commission of South Carolina:

I wanted to provide you with my written testimony in response to the SCE&G application for increase in rates & charges, since the Public Hearing locations are too far for me travel to voice my concerns. I have been living in the Bluffton area for over 4 years now and have never seen such high rates for electricity and gas. I originally came to South Carolina for a job opportunity and unfortunately lost my job over a 1year and half ago. I have been barely able to pay my monthly bills, since my income was reduced to ¼ of what I use to make. I purposely keep my heat down to 64 in the winter months and 80 in the summer just so I can have money to eat and pay my mortgage. Even with keeping the electricity usage to a minimum, my bill still averages out at about \$120.00/month. Needless to say, I can't afford it and have been forced to reduce all of my other bills just to pay this. With the recent notification that SCE&G is trying to increase the rates & charges, I am afraid that I will go without heat and use very little appliances that require electricity. I know that I am not the only one in this unfortunate situation, since the economy as a whole has transpired the effects globally.

I ask you for once, to listen to the people that make your business what it is today. We are the people who pay your salaries, so that you can go home to a nice comfortable house, which is a luxury these days. Listen to the concerns, fears and praise that the public has for your company. I know that you ultimately have reasoning behind the decision to raise the rates, but please rethink the effects of such a decision. My advice is to contact the federal government or our local government and ask for tax incentives or grants in order to cover the increases. The state of SC is one of the worst hit states in regards to unemployment and to increase the rates & charges of much needed utilities such as electricity and gas is ludicrous. Please consider the people because as a company that serves the public, wouldn't you want to say that you really do put your customers first! I appreciate your time and if you should have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 843.815.2462.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew W. Youst".

Matthew W. Youst  
13 Ashbourne Court  
Bluffton, SC 29910